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Emergency Department Fall Reduction

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Current literature suggests that a multitude of fall prevention methods, practices and tools exist and are widely available for organizations to choose from.

Goal: The main goal of the project was to reduce or eliminate falls by implementing a customized set of AHRQ patient fall reduction guidelines in the ED.

PICOT: For adult patients age 18 and over in the ED at West Suburban Medical Center, how can the implementation of AHRQ Patient Fall Reduction Guidelines, compared to current practice, effect patient fall outcomes, over an 8-week time period?

Method: Falls in the ED were calculated using a standard patient fall calculation method (number of patient falls x 1000 / number of patients seen in the ED). The KINDER 1 Fall Risk Assessment Tool was used to identify patients at risk for falls. Prior to implementation of AHRQ guidelines, the average annual fall rate was 1.06%. The fall rate percentage at the completion of this project was 0.30% over an 8-week time frame from (January 6, through March 2, 2019). During project implementation, one (1) total patient experienced a fall. The number of patients meeting KINDER 1 fall risk assessment criteria was 328 (n=328) out of 3,323 (n=3,323) adult patients (1 in 10). Patients age 17 or younger were omitted from project participation. When a patient was identified as a fall risk, additional standard patient fall interventions were also implemented (beds in lowest position, fall risk wristband and non-skid socks applied to patients).

Results / Outcomes: Fall rate comparison (quarterly 2018 vs. project implementation) showed, with a 95% confidence interval, no major change in fall rate percentages during the length of this project. However, there was a definite downward trend that was well established.

Nursing Implication: Additional research is needed to compare quarterly fall rates, perhaps using AHRQ recommendations, over an extended period of time in order to better understand underlying causes that contribute to patient falls in the ED across various health systems.

Biography

William G. Zic has been in the Professional Nursing Industry for more than 20 years. His background includes: Critical Care (CVICU), ED, Critical Care Transport (Air and Ground), Nursing Leadership as ICU Manager and most recently, Academia as Professor of Nursing.

Notes: